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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICEAttorney Docket No. 69568/105

In re patent application of
Jeffrey W. EBERHARD et al
Serial No. Unassigned
Filed: May 9, 1997
For: X-RAY COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY (CT) SYSTEM FOR
DETECTING THIN OBJECTS

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-identified application, Applicants respectfully request that the following amendments be entered into the application:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A method to [help] ascertain the presence [or absence] of an object in a three-dimensional volume represented by a plurality of voxels, wherein the object is smaller in at least one dimension than a linear dimension of the voxels, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) radiation scanning the three-dimensional volume to determine a property of each of a plurality of voxels representing the three-dimensional volume;

(b) identifying voxels having similar values of said property to identify a contiguous group of voxels having said similar values using a contiguity evaluation process wherein, for a given voxel, voxels in the same plane as the given voxel, and in planes above and below

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